

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

DLOS-04 SAL-01 OFA-01 IO-11 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 CG-00

DOT-00 FMC-01 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-05

SAJ-01 OES-03 INT-05 /093 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8605

INFO USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK IMMEDIATE

COMICEDEFOR

CINCLANT

CNO

SECDEF

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 01595

E.O. 11652: XGD-1

TAGS: EFIS, PFOR, MARR, IC, UK, US, NATO

SUBJECT: ICELAND/UK FISHERIES DISPUTE: COMPENSATION

OFFERED TO BRITISH TRAWLERSMEN

REF: LONDON 1411

1. FRED PEART, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANNOUNCED
JANUARY 29 THAT HMG WILL COMPENSATE BRITISH TRAWLERSMEN
FOR THEIR LOSS OF EARNINGS WHILE HMG WAITS FOR RESPONSE
FROM ICELANDIC PRIME MINISTER HALLGRIMSSON TO PRO-
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POSALS MADE DURING TALKS LAST WEEKEND. 100,000 POUNDS

HAVE BEEN SET ASIDE TO COVER PAYMENTS DIRECTLY TO THE TRAWLMEN TO COMPENSATE FOR EARNINGS THEY WOULD HAVE MADE WITHOUT ICELANDIC HARRASSMENT DURING THE PERIOD JANUARY 24 - FEBRUARY 4. THE TRAWLMEN THREATENED, AND HAD BEGUN. TO PULL OUT OF ICELANDIC WATERS UNLESS GIVEN ADEQUATE AND RELIABLE PROTECTION. THIS WOULD HAVE PROVIDED ICELAND WITH A PROPAGANDA VICTORY AND ACCORDING TO THE PRESS WOULD HAVE DEALT BLOW TO THE BRITISH NEGOTIATING POSITION. (THIS IS A VIEW TO WHICH FCO SOURCES HAVE COUNSELLED WE NOT ATTACH TOO MUCH SIGNIFICANCE.) TOM NEILSON, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL TRAWLER OFFICIALS GUILD, SAID HE WAS VERY PLEASED WITH THE 100,000 POUND FIGURE AND THE TRAWLMEN HAVE NOW RETURNED TO FISHING.

2. FCO AND FISHERIES SOURCES REMAIN RELUCTANT TO GO BEYOND PRIME MINISTER WILSON'S STATEMENT TO COMMONS JANUARY 28 IN DISCUSSING SITUATION. FCO SOURCE STATED HMG WAS NOT OVERLY CONCERNED ABOUT DELAYED RESPONSE AS THEY FULLY APPRECIATE HALLGRIMSSON'S DELICATE POSITION VIS-A-VIS HIS CABINET.

3. FISHERIES OFFICIAL WHO ACTED AS TECHNICAL ADVISER DURING LAST WEEKEND'S TALKS SAID THAT ON PURELY SCIENTIFIC BASIS THERE IS NO ANSWER TO PROBLEM. QUOTAS WHICH WOULD ALLOW PROTECTION AND RELUVENTION OF STOCKS ARE SIMPLY NOT COMPATIBLE WITH THE MINIMUM POSITION ON TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH TAKEN BY EACH PARTY. ON THIS BASIS, HE IS NOT OPTIMISTIC THAT THE ICELANDERS WILL ACCEPT ANY OF THE VARIOUS FORMULAE PROPOSED TO THEM. HE ADDED THAT IT WAS OBVIOUS DURING THE TALKS THAT HALLGRIMSSON HAS LITTLE OR NO ROOM IN WHICH TO MANEUVER. ACCORDING TO SOURCE, HALLGRIMSSON WOULD ONLY TALK IN DETAIL ON TONNAGE WHEN CLOSETED PRIVATELY WITH WILSON. WHEN SURROUNDED BY HIS ADVISERS HE WOULD FOLLOW THE USUAL HARD LINE. FISHERIES SOURCE STATED THAT HALLGRIMQSON WAS UNDERCUT DURING MEETINGS BY HIS JUSTICE MINISTER'S RELUCTANCE TO CURB THE "HYPER-ACTIVE" ICELANDIC GUN BOAT SKIPPERS. FISHERIES OFFICIAL CONCLUDED BY SAYING HE DOES NOT THINK HMG MINISTERS

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HAVE DEVELOPED CONTINGENCY PLANS TO DEAL WITH ICELANDIC REJECTION OF PROPOSALS. HE SAID HE FEELS FURTHER MEDIATION IS IMPOSSIBLE AND THAT ONLY HOPE CAN BE THROUGH ARBITRATION BY MUTUALLY ACCEPTED THIRD PARTY.

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